

Response dated 5 January 2004

Response to Final Office Action mailed 5 November 2003

Amendments to the Claims

The following complete set of pending claims replaces the previous set of claims.

11. (Currently Amended) A disposable absorbent article, the article having a first waist region, a second waist region, and a crotch region positioned between the first waist region and the second waist region, the absorbent article further comprising:
 - a ~~substantially fluid impervious~~ backsheet joined to a fluid pervious topsheet, the backsheet comprising a web made of a substantially liquid impervious material; and
 - an absorbent core disposed between the topsheet and the backsheet, the absorbent core comprising absorbent core components

wherein a multi-layered first absorbent core component is non-removably disposed in at least the crotch region and has an acquisition layer and an acquisition/distribution layer, and at least one removable second absorbent core component is removably disposed in the first waist region and is in fluid communication with the first absorbent core component, and

wherein the backsheet further comprises first access means for providing access to the removable second absorbent core component through the backsheet so that the removable second absorbent core component may be removed from the absorbent article through the backsheet without having to remove the absorbent article from a wearer, the first access means comprising a first discontinuity in the web, the first discontinuity being positioned in the first waist region, a first recloseable flap secured over the first discontinuity, and a first fastener for recloseably joining the first flap to the backsheet.
12. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 11, wherein the acquisition and acquisition/distribution layers of the first absorbent core component comprise fibrous nonwoven materials, fibrous wet-laid web materials, open-celled polymeric foam materials, or combinations thereof.
17. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 11, wherein the second absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials, fibrous wet-laid web

materials, open-celled polymeric foam materials, absorbent gelling materials, or combinations thereof.

20. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 17, wherein the second absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials and open-celled polymeric foam materials.

32. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 17, wherein the second absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials and absorbent gelling materials.

33. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 11, wherein the absorbent core further comprises at least one removable third absorbent core component removably disposed in the second waist region and in fluid communication with the first absorbent core component and the backsheet further comprises second access means for providing access to the removable third absorbent core component through the backsheet so that the removable third absorbent core component may be removed from the absorbent article through the backsheet without having to remove the absorbent article from the wearer, the second access means comprising a second discontinuity in the web, the second discontinuity being positioned in the second waist region, a second reclosable flap secured over the second discontinuity, and a second fastener for resealably joining the second flap to the backsheet.

37. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 33, wherein the third absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials, fibrous wet-laid web materials, open-celled polymeric foam materials, absorbent gelling materials, or combinations thereof.

38. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 37, wherein the third absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials and open-celled polymeric foam materials.

39. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 37, wherein the third absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials and absorbent gelling materials.
43. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 11 wherein the second absorbent core component can be replaced by a replacement second core component having the same structure as the component which was removed.
44. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 33 wherein the third absorbent core component can be replaced by a replacement third core component having the same structure as the component which was removed.
82. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 12, wherein the acquisition and acquisition/distribution layers of the first absorbent core component comprise fibrous nonwoven materials and open-celled polymeric foam materials.
83. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 12, wherein the fibrous nonwoven materials of the acquisition and acquisition/distribution layers are polyester fiber materials, polyethylene fiber materials, polypropylene fiber materials, cotton fiber materials, cellulose fiber materials, chemically stiffened cellulose fiber materials, twisted cellulose fiber materials, curled cellulose fiber materials, eucalyptus fiber materials, or combinations thereof.
84. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 12, wherein the acquisition and acquisition/distribution layers of the first absorbent core component further comprise absorbent gelling materials.
85. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 11, wherein the first absorbent core component further comprises a storage/redistribution layer.
86. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 85, wherein the storage/redistribution layer of the first absorbent core component comprises fibrous

nonwoven materials, fibrous wet-laid web materials, open-celled polymeric foam materials, absorbent gelling materials, or combinations thereof.

87. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 86, wherein the storage/redistribution layer of the first absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials and open-celled polymeric foam materials.
88. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 86, wherein the storage/redistribution layer of the first absorbent core component comprises fibrous nonwoven materials and absorbent gelling materials.
89. (Previously Presented) The disposable absorbent article of Claim 86, wherein the fibrous nonwoven materials of the storage/redistribution layer are polyester fiber materials, polyethylene fiber materials, polypropylene fiber materials, cotton fiber materials, cellulose fiber materials, chemically stiffened cellulose fiber materials, twisted cellulose fiber materials, curled cellulose fiber materials, eucalyptus fiber materials, or combinations thereof.